

life. It frequently happens that a man, with a great deal of sense, but with little usage of the world, is not so well received as one of inferior parts, but with a gentleman-like behavior."¹ Letter CI, "Next to character, which is founded upon solid merit, the most pleasing thing to one's self is to please, and that depends upon the manner of exerting those good qualities that form the character."² Letter CXC, "There is a certain dignity of manners absolutely necessary, to make even the most valuable character either respected or respectable."³ Letter CLXV, "There I pleased to some degree by showing a desire to please, I took care never to be absent or distraight; but, on the contrary, attended to every thing that was said, done or even looked, in company. I never failed in the minutest attentions and was never journalier. These things, and not my exaremens, made me fashionable."⁴ Letter CXC advises the son to read Cicero's Decorum. In Letter CCXXXIX, Chesterfield gives in his epigrammatic style the ideal qualities of a man of fashion, "Your great point at present at Paris.... is to become entirely a man of fashion; to be well bred without ceremony, easy without negligence, steady and intrepid with modesty, genteel without affectation, insinuating without meanness, cheerful without being noisy, frank without discretion, and secret without mysteriousness; to know the proper time and place for whatever you say or do, and to do it with an air of condition."⁵

1. Chesterfield's Letters to His Son, p 41, Letter XLIV.

2. op. cit., p 98, Letter CI.

3. op. cit., p 243, Letter CXC.

4. op. cit., p 194 f, Letter CLXV.

5. op. cit., p 357, Letter CCXXXIX.